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DEPARTMENT OF RED CROSS NURSING

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THE SCHOOLS OF NURSING IN THE OLD WORLD

IV. THE CONSTANTINOPLE SCHOOL

FROM the standpoint of the unique and the spectacular perhaps no school of nursing in the world presents so many high lights of interest as that organized in the spring of 1920 by Mrs. Anna E. Rothrock in Constantinople. The location alone is one to conjure up all sorts of romantic allusions, for the school and hospital are temporarily housed in the former harem of a Turkish Pasha in historic old Stamboul. Here are assembled one of the most heterogenous assemblages of pupil nurses ever gathered together:—Moslem and Christian,—among them Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians and Russians. As might be expected from such an unusual assortment of nationalities, many unusual problems are presented. The psychology of the various racial types is essentially peculiar. There are no nursing traditions in the country to build upon. Instead, strange prejudices and stranger attitudes prevail toward this work. Moreover, there seems to be a definite lack in the Near Easterner of certain qualities of character which the Occidental looks upon as fundamental and absolutely essential in creating a good nurse. Yet one has only to see the need for such education among the women of the former Ottoman Empire and the social conditions that prevail in Constantinople to make every effort seem worth while.

Red Cross nurses have directed the school from the beginning. Its control is vested in a committee of members selected from the Constantinople Chapter of the American Red Cross and members of the American Colony in Constantinople, including the American College for Women, Roberts College and other American interests. On the local committee are such influential persons as Admiral Mark A. Bristol, American High Commissioner in command of American Naval Affairs, who is also chairman of the Constantinople Chapter of the A. R. C.; Dr. Patrick, president of the American College for Women; representatives from Roberts College for Men, the American Board of Missions, officials of the Standard Oil Company in the Near East and various other American business men.

The A. R. C. Nursing Staff consists of Lyda M. Anderson, Superintendent of the Hospital and Director of the School; Mary E. Bethel, assistant superintendent; Ruth Bridge, instructor, (theoretical and

practical); Edith Clendenning, supervisor of the Surgical Department; Adah Klein Butts, floor supervisor; Bertha Whipple, dietitian; and Elizabeth Marshall, director of the out-patient department and instructor in the public health course for student nurses. Miss Marshall is also attached to the Constantinople Chapter, which defrays part of her salary expense.

Staff members of the faculty of the American College for Women teach the sciences,—chemistry, bacteriology, anatomy and physiology. The possibility of some closer affiliation with the Constantinople College is being discussed. It is hoped that the School ultimately may be made a definite department of the College.

In spite of the fact that the hospital is in an antiquated building, badly in need of repairs, the American nurses have wrought wonders in adapting it to practical uses. There are very few conveniences, a handicap that naturally makes the work much more laborious. The recent completion of a steam-fitting job by which steam and hot water were carried into the laundry and diet kitchen ranks almost as an epoch in the history of the school. The announcement brought vividly to my mind the ramshackle "wash house" in the back yard which at the time of my visit did duty as a laundry, and where a nurse was frequently seen struggling valiantly with a refractory clothes line as she applied her technical skill to hanging out the washing.

Yet notwithstanding such obstacles as these circumstances presented, the work done in the hospital, the present capacity of which is 80 beds, is excellent, and the patients are well cared for. That the American Hospital has proven its value to the American Colony beyond doubt is demonstrated by the fact that one of the patients from that group,—Mrs. Mary Van Buren, of Newport, R. I., a daughter of the late John D. Archbold, of the Standard Oil Company, has left a scholarship for the nurse who cared for her while she was in the hospital. This scholarship will enable the pupil nurse, a young Bulgarian, to go to America to perfect herself in some nursing specialty for later service in her own country. Moreover, the hospital has been able recently to serve some traveling Americans, who might otherwise have lost their lives.

After establishing the hospital upon admirably conceived foundations, Mrs. Rothrock resigned in the spring of 1921 and was succeeded by Miss Anderson, who like her predecessor has surmounted all sorts of obstacles in developing the school. Writing of her tour of inspection last April, Sophie C. Nelson, the A. R. C. Nursing Supervisor, reports:

I have never seen a smoother running place. The nurses here are very happy and each one feels that she is really helping accomplish something. At

present there are twenty-two students in the School. (This number was later decreased to twenty.) But a tremendous effort is being made to give them the very best training possible. Besides the regular curriculum special instruction is given to them singly and in groups on their weak points. Dealing with girls of several different nationalities who understand English but imperfectly, it has been a most difficult task to get over to them the theoretical instruction. Miss Bridge and the other American nurses have an infinite amount of patience with the student nurses.

The curriculum has been planned to coincide with the requirements of the League of Nursing Education in America, so the student nurses are getting excellent theory. If the School is weak it would be in clinical material, although every effort is made to give the students the greatest possible benefit from all the material available. The hospital is growing fast, especially the obstetrical and out-patient department, which is especially large, considering the size of the institution. This department is in charge of Miss Marshall, who has two student nurses assigned to her all the time.

They do clinic work in the morning and home visiting in the afternoon. One afternoon a week a well baby clinic is held. Pre-natal cases and sick babies and children come in the forenoon to the regular dispensary, but from now on they will be accounted for separately, as if they were a regular clinic. This is done for the purpose of home visiting, as it will be possible to follow up certain cases only and an effort is going to be made to follow up every baby and pregnant mother. Miss Marshall was given the out-patient department in order to get in touch with the people and get an idea of the type here. As soon as is possible another nurse will be added to the hospital and then Miss Marshall will have only the public health work.

In developing the field work a special restricted district will be chosen in the vicinity of the hospital. Here a school will be secured, in order to get school nursing work, and clinics will be established in the American Hospital to take care of defective cases. An arrangement has been made with the Near East Relief whereby the student nurses may get three weeks of social case work with that organization. The field chosen should be sufficient to give material for excellent field work. It is also small enough to insure a good demonstration of public health work.

The Red Crescent, the Turkish equivalent of the American Red Cross, has recently appointed a committee on Public Health. They recently met with the American Red Cross Committee and have become interested in Miss Marshall and her work. There are, of course, many factors to be taken into consideration here,—nationalities, religions, many prejudices and restrictions of privileges of the women. However, the contact with the American Red Cross may be regarded as the beginning of an aroused interest which is so sadly needed.

Perhaps no field in the Old World offers more promising opportunities for constructive educational work than does this Turkish project where the American Hospital is sowing the first seeds of community consciousness as to proper care of the sick. As Miss Nelson's report has shown, the first year's work has been largely concentrated upon educating the people up to the point of realizing the A. B. C. of good hospital care, while public health is still in the embryonic stage.

Eventually, as the Turkish Red Crescent coöperates more actively

with the undertaking, far-reaching results of almost unimaginable significance may be expected. For the American Red Cross is the only neutral agency of its kind in the country and the Turks, inclined to suspect propaganda, proselyting and ulterior motives in the activities of many charitable organizations, have accorded to our Red Cross a measure of confidence and discipleship that is one of the most sincere tributes ever paid to any organization. Undoubtedly, in the case of the American Hospital at Constantinople, we have builded better than we knew.

CONFERENCE OF TRAINING SCHOOL DIRECTORS IN PRAGUE

That the wheels of progress are moving in Europe is best evidenced by the programme presented at the conference of nurse directors of training schools in Europe held in Prague May 30 to June 1, inclusive. Many of the subjects discussed, in their scope and tone, suggest a Convention of the National League of Nursing Education. Among the papers read were the following: Standards: Is a Standard Curriculum Possible for the Schools in Different Countries in Europe? Can the League of Nursing Education Assist the Schools to Higher and More Uniform Standards? by Lyda Anderson; Can the League Assist in Better Preparation of the Graduates for the Desired Graduate Courses in America and Elsewhere? by Helen Bridge. Curriculum: Length of Course. How Overcome Foreign Language Difficulty: What Subjects Can Be Taught by American Red Cross Nurses Through Interpreter. * * * What Special Privileges Should Be Given to Nuns as Pupils? Papers by Miss Lentell and Miss Bridge. What a Government Might Be Interested and Able To Do in Creating Positions and Salaries Such As Will Attract the Desired Class of Women to This Profession. How We Believe Our Committee Will Be Able To Help Most in Organization and Maintenance of a Nursing School of Highest Grade. Among the speakers, in addition to these already named, were Miss Parsons, Miss Matthews, Miss Newton, Miss McDonnell, Miss Robinson, Miss Kacena, Miss Beard, Miss Besom, Miss Olmsted, Miss Crowell, Miss Walker and Dr. Hamilton. Dr. Eversole presided.

Preceding the conference of Directors of Schools of Nursing, a conference for all diplomtized native nurses was held in Prague the week of April 18 to April 25, inclusive, previous to the withdrawal of another group of A. R. C. personnel. At this conference the programme was quite comprehensive. Miss Parsons, Miss Besom and Miss Torrance participated in the discussions of such subjects as Qualifications of the Nurse, Ethics, Standards, Organization and Administration of Public Health Nursing, and Development of Working Principles, Especially in Child Welfare Wrok.

Social Hygiene of Childhood, Public Health Administration, Tuberculosis, History and Development of Social Work were dealt with by a group of Czech physicians and Miss Elsie Bond spoke on Social Casework.